

Message Text

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22-11

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DOTE-00 EB-07 SIL-01 LAB-04 OMB-01

TRSE-00 /026 W

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R 302238Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8684

UNCLAS OTTAWA 0406

POUCHED ALL CONSULATES IN CANADA INFO

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELTN, CA

SUBJ: NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY: PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES

REF: 10 FAM 522

1. TRANSPORT MINISTER OTTO LANG UNVEILED IN PARLIAMENT ON JANUARY 29 GOC POLICY TO REORGANIZE RAIL PASSENGER SERVICES WITH VIEW TO KEEPING \$167 MILLION DEFICIT (80 PERCENT COVERED BY FEDERAL TREASURY) FROM RISING TO \$400 MILLION IN 1980. LANG STATEMENT EMPHASIZED MAINTENANCE OF VIABLE SERVICES ESPECIALLY IN WINDSON-QUEBEC CORRIDOR AND IN COMMUTER TERRITORIES. HOWEVER, INTEGRATION OVER NEXT FEW YEARS OF CN AND CP INTO SINGLE PASSENGER SERVICE WEST OF WINNIPEG AND EAST OF MONTREAL AS WELL AS ABANDONMENT OF POORLY PATRONIZED LINES IN MANY PARTS OF COUNTRY ARE ATTRACTING MOST ATTENTION. IDEA OF CROWN CORPORATION FOR PASSENGER SERVICES - SIMILAR TO AMTRAK - PROPOSED IN 1974 ELECTION CAMPAIGN APPEARS FORGOTTEN FOR TIME BEING. OPPOSITION SPOKESMAN EMPHASIZED ABANDONMENT ASPECTS AND RAILWAY LABOR IS VERY CRITICAL OF NEW ENDEAVOR. AIRGRAM FOLLOWS WITH DOCUMENTATION.

2. COMMENT: CANADA'S RAIL PASSENGER EQUIPMENT IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY OBSOLETE AND URGENT NEED
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EXISTS FOR NEW INVESTMENT IF PROPOSED SCALE OF OPERATIONS WERE TO BE MAINTAINED. GOC UNWILLING AT

THIS TIME COMMIT ITSELF TO MASSIVE FUNDING REQUIRED.
LIKELY EFFECT OF NEW POLICY WILL BE WITHDRAWAL FROM
USE OF OLDEST ROLLING STOCK AND CONCENTRATION OF
STILL OLD EQUIPMENT ON MORE LIMITED ARRAY OF SERVICES.
JOHNSON

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLICIES, RAIL TRANSPORTATION, PASSENGER TRANSPORTATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976OTTAWA00406
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760037-0676
From: OTTAWA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976015/aaaaads.tel
Line Count: 66
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hattaycs
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 06 JUL 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06 JUL 2004 by schwenja>; APPROVED <22 JUL 2004 by hattaycs>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION POLICY: PASSENGER RAIL SERVICES
TAGS: ELTN, CA
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006